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SERMON

Preached before the

JUDGES, &c.

In the time of the ASSIZES

IN THE

CATHEDRAL CHURCH

AT

GLOUCESTER.

On Sunday Aug. 7. 1681.

Published to put a stop to False and Injurious Representations.

By Edward Fowler, D.D.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N,

Printed for R. Royson, Bookseller to His most Sacred Majesty, and Walter Kestilby, 1681.

COMMON



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JUDGES

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On Sunday Aug. 1681

Published to the People by the
their Representations



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FOR DOCT

Printed for R. Bayle, Bookseller, in His most Ex-
cellent Majesty's and Wm. King's, 1681.

A
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.

THe desire of many Worthy Gentlemen, who were pleased to think this Sermon seasonable, could not have prevailed with me to make it thus publick, were it not for the Entertainment it hath met with from another sort of Auditors, who have represented it as Fanatical, and almost all that's naught.

But, as I have not (I thank God) so little of a Christian in me, as to return Cursing for Cursing, or Reviling for Reviling; but, on the contrary, do most heartily pray for these men, who express the greatest enmity against me: so will I no longer trouble the Reader with complaints of their most injurious and provoking behaviour upon the account of the following Discourse, but only intreat him to be Impartial in the perusal of it; and then to judge between them and me, whether I have given them any other cause to be so enraged, than what the blessed Apostle gave the Galatians, viz. Telling them the truth.

And I appeal to the most Censorious and Captious of those that heard me, whether I have been guilty of the least Unfaithfulness in this Publication.

God is my Witness, that I had the best of Designs in Penning and Preaching this Sermon, viz. A sincere and earnest desire to do some service to the Protestant Religion, His Majesty, and the Church of England, as by Law established: Nor am I conscious to my self of any crime in the

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pursuing of this Design, unless honest impartiality in exposing the Doings, which are apparently most highly prejudicial to the interest of all these (than which nothing in this world should be dearer to us) ought to render me blame-worthy.

But I am not in the least solicitous about what defects may be found in the Discourse, that are not of a moral nature; for, as the ingenuous will easily overlook them (especially in a Discourse not design'd for the Press) so 'twould be a great piece of weakness to be at all concerned at the Censures of those that lye at the catch, and who if they find no faults will be sure to make them.

But the main thing I intended this Preface for is yet behind, viz. A faithful Narrative of a matter of Fact, which hath had the ill fortune to be as falsely and injuriously represented as this Sermon. It is this, There lately stood in the West-window of the Quire of Gloucester Cathedral, a most scandalous Picture, viz. Of the Blessed Trinity: Which, had it been much observed, could never have outstood the first year of the Reformation; and much less continued till about two years since. I was first shewed it by one of my Brother Prebendaries about four years since: After which time, the sight of it, when I read at the Communion Table, did often discompose me. And, thinking my self obliged to do my endeavour to have it taken down, though no great notice, that I knew, was taken of it, I made no haste for that reason; but some time after my return from my Residence, I advised with one who is a most learned and eminent Prelate of our Church about it; and he, expressing high offence at it, told me we were all bound in Conscience not to suffer such a thing, now we had observed it, to stand longer. Hereupon I resolv'd to complain of it in Chapter at my next Residence, but there being not above two, or at the most three of us upon the place

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place all that time, I put off the doing it till my Residence the following year. And then, having a good opportunity (there being about the Conclusion of that Residence, our whole number except one, present) at a Chapter that was called about other business, the very last day of my stay (which was Midsummer Eve 1679.) having all of us viewed it before, I moved my Brethren in Chapter (the Officers that were present being first desired to withdraw, because I would have the matter carried as privately as might be) that it might be taken down: Representing the hatefulnes of such a Picture, and what scandal it would give, should it happen to become more publick (as it quickly might, it being known to more than our selves, and that not by my means) and the great reasonableness of doing it at this nick of time, seeing through oversight it had been omitted thus long: it being not long after the discovery of the Plot, and many Factionous people then at work in vilifying the Church of England as advancing apace towards Popery. This motion of mine was readily entertained by the Chapter, and the Idol most chearfully voted down, and the Act of Chapter afterwards Recorded in the Register Book by some of the Prebendaries, where it now stands. I moved, as I said, that it should be taken down, that is, by a Glasier; but for a great reason, which I think fit to conceal, till provoked to publish it, it was as readily consented to, that it should be immediately broken, as 'twas before, that it should be taken down, and new glass set up in the room of it. Whereupon the greater number of the Chapter went together to the place to countenance the action, and it was done by my hand. We could not in the least doubt, but that this was done very regularly, it being a hard case if the Governours of a Cathedral should not be invested with as much Authority as this comes to. But when it came to be known abroad, there was a hideous noise and clamour made by some few people; who are, I dare say, the

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the first Protestants that ever so concerned themselves about such a vile Relique of Popish Superstition. The clamour continues to this very day; and, after I had Preached this Sermon, complaint was made of the high misdemeanour to the Judges, and some, further to vent their spleen against me for my Sermon, did what lay in them to have it presented by the Grand Jury of the City, though a thing of above two years standing; Which doughty attempt (as well it might) made sport enough.

But that which necessitates my publishing this Narrative, is the several shameful Untruths they have made to pass for current, far and near, among those who have little knowledge of them and me; for those that know either of us cannot easily believe them. Particularly,

First, they represent this Action, as done by me upon my own head. They say not one word of a Chapters being concerned in the case, and so expose me for a Rash and furious Zealat.

*Secondly, To lay still greater load upon me, they have given it out by themselves, and their Agents (particularly a * little Agent they have in London, a most disingenuous Creature, of whom I have deserved, as he can't forget, much better things) that it was only the Picture of a Saint or Angel, or at worst of our Saviour, when the contrary was visible to us all, and to others also, as I have intimated already. It was the old Popish Picture of the Trinity; God the Father represented by an Old man with a very long Grey Beard, and a huge beam of Light about his head: God the Son, by a Crucifix between his knees: And God the Holy Ghost, by a Dove with spread wings, under his Beard: which was patcht with a piece or two (as I remember) of plain glass, I have the Copy of the Picture by me as it stood in the Window, drawn by one who lives in that City, that had (as he told me) viewed it at times for twenty years together.*

Thirdly,

* See
Prov. 26.
24, 25, 26.
See Prov.
25. 18.

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Thirdly, They represent it as done in compliance with the Scotch Rebels, who, they say, were then in Arms. But as this is most false, (these wretches being routed before this time, and the news of it come to Gloucester in the Publick intelligence) so every body must needs see the woful silliness and Ridiculousness, as well as Malice of this suggestion.

*There are some I confess, who are of better Tempers than the Furious people who have made such a loud clamour, that express their dislike of Breaking this Picture, which they call a great indecency. But I would fain know of them, why must it be done so decently? Is it because it was a gross abuse of the Holy Trinity? But if it was not an indecency to break in pieces the Brazen Serpent, when it came to be abused, though of God's own institution, much less can it be so, to break that, the making of which God hath * forbidden ^{* Deut. 4.} in so strict a manner. But I have said already that it had ^{15, &c.} been done after these mens decent fashion, that is, taken down by a Glazier, might I have had my will, and had there not been a great probability, if not certainty, of our making our Order to no purpose, if it were not done this way; as my Worthy Brethren will bear me witness: who are all living, and can testifie the truth of my Narrative of this so Scandalous a thing, viz. The destroying of an Idol, that even Moderate Papists have condemned, and some of the better sort of Heathens also; that is, a Corporeal Representation of the Great God, and which one would wonder should have any Patrons, besides the monstrous Sect of Anthropomorphites.*

I perswaded my self with great difficulty, to publish this Account to the world, and could not resolve upon it till I considered, how well it becomes me to disabuse abundance of people, who have been imposed upon by false stories, as well as to

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vindicate my own Reputation. And besides, this I have now done, will not make the thing much more publick than it was before: no nor at all more publick than the late Doings at the Gloucester Assizes, will perhaps make it. I have only taken a course to make the truth about this matter as publick, as some men have made gross falsehoods. And indeed I am now sensible, I should have done this long ago, and that I have been much too patient.

I am prepared to say much more of the Unworthy Treatment I have had from some upon this account, and of what Methods were used to raise clamour, but I have done enough at present; my Design being only to suppress lying Reports, and to disabuse (as I said) those who have received them, not the exposing of particular persons, which I am not like to do, till any of themselves shall make it necessary.

I will Conclude with this Address to my Adversaries (in allusion to our Blessed Saviours reply to the Wretch that smote him) viz. If I have spoken, or done, evil, and transgressed the Law, bear witness of the evil, the Law is open: But if well, why smite you after so unchristian a manner him with your Tongues, for want of sharper weapons, who never had any quarrel or controversie with any of you, and who is resolved to requite your malice, with never ceasing to Pray for you?

SERMON

Preached in the CATHEDRAL of

GLOUCESTER.

On Sunday, Aug. 7. 1681.

I TIM. I. 19.

*Holding Faith and a good Conscience, which
some having put away, concerning Faith
have made Shipwrack.*

NOtwithstanding that the whole intentment of the Christian Faith be the promoting of Righteousness, True Holiness and Universal Goodness in the Hearts first, and then in the Lives of Men; and that it is most admirably fitted for that End: yet there arose even in the earliest and purest days of Christianity a Generation of People, who laboured to reconcile Light and Darkness, the Christian Religion and a Wicked Life: And although they pretended to adhere to the Faith of the Gospel, denied the necessity of Good Works, and let open

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the Flood-gates to all Ungodliness. They made the Holy Jesus, who was manifested that he might destroy the works of the Devil, the great Patron of sin, and turned the Grace of God into *Lasciviousness*; did not only receive this Grace in vain, and rendered it, as much as lay in them, ineffectual to the bettering mens lives and natures, but also made it the greatest Promoter and Encourager of *that*, for the utter destruction and extirpation of which it was designed.

This they did by corrupting the Christian Doctrine, and bringing into it a company of wicked and Licentious Principles, and by endeavouring to make that pass for the Doctrine of Christ, which was no better than the Doctrine of Devils.

Of these Wretched People St. Paul saith that, *They professed that they knew God, but in Works they denied him, being abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate; Tit. 1. 16.* And in diverse other places he discourseth of these men, calling them *false Apostles, deceitful workers*, and the like; and warns the Christians he wrote to, to beware of them: As do other of the Apostles also, particularly S. Peter, S. John and S. Jude. Now would we know how it should come to pass, that the Christian Religion should be so strangely perverted, and made use of for the building of that which it was designed to destroy. We are assured that it proceeds not from the Obscurity of the Writings of the New Testament; for they as plainly, as 'tis possible for words to do it, do every where condemn all Unrighteousness and Sin. But it was caused by *Wresting* the Scriptures and putting them upon the rack to force them to speak quite contrary to their intention. Thus S. Peter tells us the Epistles of his Brother Paul were abused, that *those that were unlearned and unstable wrested them to their own destruction.* But

But how came it to pass that any should dare to make thus bold with the Scriptures? My Text Answers the question. The Apostle in these words tells us that, their *making shipwrack of the Faith* was occasioned by their *having first put away a good Conscience*.

He here exhorts his Son *Timothy* to take care of holding both *Faith* and a *good Conscience*; and the Motive he useth to quicken his care is, that those who are not careful to *hold* both, will be in danger of *losing* both. So much is implied in his saying, that *some having put away a good Conscience have made shipwrack concerning Faith*.

Holding Faith, or the Faith, and a good Conscience, which some having put away, concerning Faith, or the Faith, have made shipwrack.

First, We will explain the terms, or endeavour to shew what it is to *hold the Faith*, and what to *make shipwrack* of it; as also what it is to *hold a good Conscience*, and what to put it away.

Secondly, That *holding the Faith* will nothing avail us, except we also *hold a good Conscience*.

Thirdly, That *mens making shipwrack concerning the Faith* is occasioned by their having first *put away a good Conscience*.

First, For Explication of the terms; we will enquire,

1. What it is to *hold the Faith*, and what to *make shipwrack* of it. To *hold the Faith* is to adhere to the belief and profession of the Doctrine of the Gospel. *Holding or keeping the Faith* sometimes implyeth also a *life answerable to the Christian doctrine*; as where *S. Paul* saith, *I have kept the Faith*: And where the

Author to the *Hebrews* exhorts the Christians, to hold fast the profession of their Faith without wavering. But here it can signifie no more than the belief and profession of that Doctrine, because it is distinguished from holding a good Conscience.

Again, to make shipwrack of the Faith is to do either of these two things. Either, First, expressly to Renounce the Articles of the Christian Belief, the main fundamental Articles; all or any of those on which the whole Frame of Christianity is erected, and which are the Essential materials of it. As that *Jesus is the Son of God*: that *he dyed for our sins*, and *rose again for our justification*: that *he ascended into Heaven*, and *will come again at the end of the world to judge the quick and the dead*: that *men shall be rewarded or punished according to their works*: that *Faith, Repentance and New Obedience are of absolute necessity to our obtaining the Divine Favour, and everlasting life*. These and the like Articles which either are declared necessary to Salvation by our Saviour or his Apostles, or which from their own nature appear so to be, as containing necessary motives, encouragements or helps to a holy life, these are such as the renouncing any of which is making shipwrack concerning the Faith.

But the misunderstanding such Doctrines as have no such weight and stress laid upon them, or which considered in themselves appear to be of such a nature, as that the misunderstanding of them is consistent with true Goodness, cannot be called a making Shipwrack of the Faith: For if so, it will be impossible to know who holds the Faith, and who makes shipwrack of it: There being many points so disputably expressed in the Scriptures, and which there is such a diversity of Opinions about, even among Good as well as Learned men,

men, that it may be an argument of too great confidence and presumption in any, to conclude peremptorily that *theirs* is the true notion of them. Or, Secondly, The introducing such Principles and Practices into the Christian Religion as do manifestly strike at any of its Fundamentals; and particularly such as directly, or in their evident consequences, enervate the Promises, Threatnings, or Precepts of the Gospel, and contradict the great design of Christianity, *viz.* that of making men Sober, Righteous and Godly, *this* may also very properly be called *making shipwreck of the Faith*. It is truly so notwithstanding it may be joyned with a profession of *all* the Articles of our Religion: For who seeth not that those who corrupt it with such Doctrines or Practices, are as injurious to the Faith, as the down-right opposers of its main Principles; or rather the more injurious of the two, there being much more danger of a false Friend, than of a professed and open enemy.

2. Would we know what it is to *hold a good Conscience*; *this* is, in short, sincerely to endeavour to walk in all the Commandments of the Lord blameless: To endeavour impartially to acquaint our selves with the Divine Will, and when we understand it, to comply therewith, although it be never so cross to *our own* wills and natural inclinations. And therefore, on the contrary, to *put away* a good Conscience is to be bent upon the pleasing our own wills, and gratifying our sensual Appetites: to give up our selves to be acted and governed by fleshly and impure Lusts: To be devoted to the Service of corrupt, carnal and worldly affections and interests. Where the *lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life*, the love of Pleasures, Riches or Honours, are predominant in the Soul, there a good Conscience is put away.

Second-

Secondly, We next come to shew that *holding the Faith* will nothing avail us, if withal it be not our care to hold a *good Conscience*. This is apparent in that the Renewing of mens natures, and Bettering their Lives is the only end both of Natural and Revealed Religion; and were not this the end thereof, Religion would be the vainest and most insignificant thing in the world. The Heathens themselves were well aware of *this*, and therefore the professed intendment of their Philosophy was, *Summum bonum est virtutis in rebus, The purgation and perfection of the humane life*. They well knew that no body is the better for the *best* Principles, where they are only *believed* and not *lived*.

And as for the Principles of the *Christian Religion*, which the Ancients used to call the *Christian Philosophy*, I shall not need to prove that our belief of *these* is required wholly upon the account of the great efficacy they have for the transforming of us into the Divine likenels, the subjecting our Wills to the Will of God, and the making us holy in all manner of Conversation. And therefore we find our Blessed Saviour and his Apostles making the whole of a Christian to consist in *keeping his sayings*, in *doing the things he commands them*, in *Faith that worketh by love*, and in *the new Creature*. And therefore we see the greatest contempt cast upon Knowledge and Profession and Faith, unaccompanied with an answerable life and practice. Therefore we read, that *Faith without works is dead*, that *Faith is dead being alone*, as being utterly unable to stand us in the least stead, and as being so unable to save us, as greatly to aggravate our Condemnation.

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The Papists lay mighty weight upon their Orthodoxy, their believing as the Church believes, and flatter themselves with a fond conceit, that the *goodness of their Faith* will make great amends for the *badness of their lives*. But suppose it true, that *they are the Orthodox believers*, and all the Christian World Hereticks besides themselves, as *they* would have us believe, yet the *Devils* are as Orthodox as *they* can be for their hearts, but their Orthodoxy makes them but the more miserable; if they did not believe so truly, they would not tremble as they do. *The Devils also believe and tremble*, James 2. 19. In short, we are not more assured from the Holy Scriptures that God made the *Heavens and the Earth*, than we are of the truth of this Proposition, that the most sound belief will not do us the least service while it is accompanied with a naughty life: That the most Orthodox Sentiments will nothing avail us while joyned with an Heretical Conversation.

Thirdly, We proceed to shew, that mens making shipwreck concerning the Faith, is occasioned by their having first put away a good Conscience. Which (good Conscience) some having put away, concerning Faith have made shipwreck. The Apostle, speaking of some that resisted the truth, calls them men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the Faith, 2 Tim. 3. 8. Thereby intimating, that their being reprobate concerning the Faith, proceeded from the corruption of their minds, or naughtiness of their hearts, and the prevalence of evil and corrupt Affections. And the same Apostle, speaking of certain Hereticks, attributes their erring from the Faith to their gratifying particularly that lust of Covetousness, 1 Tim. 6. 10. The love of money is the

root of all evil, which while some covered after, they have erred from the Faith. And S. Peter, speaking of wicked Seducers, saith, that they had eyes full of Adultery, and hearts exercised with covetous practices: And intimateth that this is the cause of their forsaking the right way, and their beguiling unstable Souls, 1 Ep. 2. 14, 15.

Now would we be satisfied how this putting away a good Conscience occasioneth mens making shipwrack of the Faith: It is evident that it doth thus these three ways.

First, As mens addicting themselves to the satisfying of some lust or other, puts them upon devising shifts and tricks to still the disquieting clamours of their Consciences. The wrath of God being revealed from Heaven against all unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, 'tis no easie thing for any one willingly to transgress the Rules of Righteousness, without being frequently tormented with fearful expectations, and the Horrors of an Accusing and condemning Conscience. Now the most effectual way to be rid of these (next to sincere Repentance and Reformation) is either for a wicked man to perfwade himself, if he be able, that there is no God, or nothing after this Life; and consequently, that the Bible is a cheat, and all its threatenings mere scare-crows. Or if this he cannot do, in regard of the abundant evidence of the Being of a God, and the Authority of the Holy Scriptures, the course must be so to wrest and pervert the Scriptures, as to make them give liberty to certain evil practices, or to promise forgiveness of sin to certain performances that are short of forsaking it.

Thus those Hereticks in the Primitive times wrested the places wherein the Gospel is called the Law of Liberty,

Liberty, and wherein we are said to be delivered from the Law, so as to take off the Obligation of the Moral as well as the Ceremonial Law; and to give liberty to sin, and to oppose Faith to Obedience in the business of Justification and acceptance with God.

Many other instances may be given both of Ancient and Modern Hereticks perverting of passages of Scripture, so as to make them great encouragements to sin, and discouragements to a Holy life; perfectly contrary to the whole strain and tenor of the Gospel.

But I must not enlarge farther upon this Argument, because the main thing I intended in the choice of this Subject is yet behind.

Secondly, The *putting away of a good Conscience occasions making shipwrack of the Faith*, through the just judgment of God. The former particular gave us an account of wicked Mens being strongly *enclined* to make shipwrack of the Faith, and of their *endeavouring* it, *this* of their putting their inclinations into practice, and *succeeding* in their endeavours.

Men that are wedded to any lust are very forward, for their own ease, to endeavour either the embracing of Atheistical Principles, or so to abuse the Scriptures as to take encouragement from them to live in sin; but they could hardly so extinguish the light of their own minds, as to succeed in their endeavours, were it not for the judgment of God upon them, in giving them up into the Deceivers hands. To this purpose observe what the Apostle saith, 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11. *Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, (or they did not so receive it as to suffer it to have any good effect upon their hearts and lives) for this cause God shall send them strong delusions*

(or give them up to be deluded by the tricks of the Devil, the signs and lying wonders before mentioned) *that they should believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

Thirdly, The putting away of a good Conscience occasions making shipwreck of the Faith, as wicked Professors of Christianity do find it a most successful course to promote their corrupt and naughty designs, by foisting into the Christian Religion such Doctrines and Practices as favour and encourage such designs. I have shewed that those who corrupt the Christian Religion with such Doctrines or Practices as contradict the Design of it, do truly make shipwreck of the Faith; and whereas there may be given too many instances of such Hypocrites as have so done, I shall make it the whole business of what remains of the Doctrinal part of this Discourse, to shew that the Church of Rome as she is now Constituted, is most shamefully guilty in this particular.

It is to be acknowledged, that she retains the Profession of all the Fundamental and Essential Articles of the Christian Faith; a summary of which is that Creed which we call the *Apostles*, and she professeth a Reverence for the whole New Testament. If she in express terms rejected any Doctrine that is of the *Essence*, and a vital part of Christianity, her members may not be called *Christians* in any sense, and we then do very ill to say the Church of Rome.

We do not stick at calling them a Church, though a most corrupt and degenerate Church; as (to use the similitude of *Bishop Hall*) a thief is truly a man, though not a true man. A woman may retain the name

name of a wife till she's formally divorced, though she be an adulteress.

The Church of *Rome* may as truly be called a Church, as the *Jewish* Nation the People of God, after their foul Revolt from him, and Lapse into Idolatry and other wicked and impious practices.

But *this* hath been abundantly made good against this Church, that, though she holds the Foundation yet, she builds Wood, Hay and Stubble upon the Foundation: that is, she mixeth many impure Doctrines of her *own*, with the most holy and undefiled Doctrines of the Gospel. Of which I will present you with some instances, but must be very brief upon most of them.

What say you, in the first place, to her Doctrine of *Infallibility*? Which speaks her incapable of erring in any of her Decrees and Determinations: Which Infallibility the *Jesuits* will have seated in the *Pope's* Chair; others in the Pope in conjunction with a General Council; that is, a Number of Bishops and Priests packt together of his own Faction. For there is nothing he hates more than a Council truly General.

I call *this* not only a *false* but a *wicked* Doctrine, because of the infinite mischief that it doth in the world: For the *Romish* Church's pretence to Infallibility, is that which enables her to Lord it at that intolerable rate, over the minds and Consciences of her Subjects, and to make them the greatest of Slaves and Vassals. And 'tis *this* also that makes her utterly incurable of her gross corruptions, her other notorious Heresies, and the ungodly and horrid practices founded upon them. So that, so long as she continues to assume to herself the Title of *Infallible*, there is no hope to be conceived of her being ever in the least Reformed, either in her Principles or Practices.

But never was a Doctrine more shamefully baffled than *this* hath been; as easily it may, there being nothing but Interest to uphold it, nor one syllable in all the Bible to befriend it. As for *that* promise of our Saviour, that *the gates of Hell shall never prevail against his Church*, the *most* that can be concluded from thence is, that he will ever have a Church upon earth in spite of all the endeavours of Hell to destroy it. But thanks be to God, this Promise would be no whit the further from being performed, although the Devil should be permitted totally to extinguish the Church of *Rome*; though to be sure he understands his *own* interest better than once to attempt it.

But if the meaning of this Promise be (as the Romanists would have it) that *the gates of Hell shall never so prevail against the Church*, as to occasion her falling into errors of *Judgment*, why may we not as well extend it so far as to secure her also from errors of *Præfice*? *these* being no less dangerous or destructive than those of *Judgment*. But I retain so much Charity for the *Romish* Church still, as not to think her so forsaken of all Modesty, as to deny that in *this* sense, the Gates of Hell have prevailed against her with a vengeance.

And as far the other Promises which they lay any stress on, they are either such as 'tis manifest the Apostles only, and first planters of the Gospel were concerned in, or else such as belong to all Christians without exception *thus* far, as that while it is their sincere endeavour to know the truth, and to live up to their knowledge, they shall be secured from pernicious and damnable errors.

Again,

Again, What say you to the Doctrine of the *Popes Supremacy* over all other Churches and Kingdoms too, and his having a Grant of as vast Dominions upon Earth, next and immediately under Christ, as Christ himself hath under God the Father, his being King of all Kings, and Lord of all Lords, and that both in Spirituals and Temporals? I might easily tire you upon *this* head of Discourse, but all I will say to it shall be *this*, that the Charter pretended for so mighty an Empire is much too obscurely exprest to be ever understood, by any other people than the Pope and his Vassals. There is not a tittle in the Holy Scriptures for it, though we know what a noise and fluster they make with *two* Texts, *Pasce Oves meas*, and *Dabo tibi Claves*, &c. as if this Supremacy were as plainly legible in each of them, as the Doctrine of the Creation in the first verse of *Genesis*.

But, which is worst of all, how many thousands of honest people have been barbarously butcher'd, merely because their eyes would not serve them to read this Doctrine of theirs in those two Texts!

And this is that Doctrine which gives them a pretence for their restless and unwearied endeavours to get these Kingdoms again within their Clutches, and for all their desperate and Hellish designs against us.

What say you to their Doctrine of *Image-Worship*? with which I will joyn that other of *Praying to Saints and Angels*. In their Adored Council of *Trent* it is decreed, that *The Images of Christ, the Virgin mother of God, and other Saints, be especially kept in Churches; and that due Honour and Veneration be given unto them.* And afterward this Council expresseth its allowance of
 Picturing;

Picturing the Divinity it self; and accordingly Pictures of the Blessed Trinity, (Oh hateful sight!) ordinarily to be beheld in the Popish Churches. Now how would we know what the Council means by *Debitus honor & veneratio*, the due honour and veneration that is to be given to Images, if this appears by these following words, *We decree doing honour to them, because the honour which is done to them, is referred to the Prototypes which they represent. So that in the Images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, and fall down, we adore Christ, and Worship the Saints which they represent, &c.* So that the Honour and Veneration which they determine should be given to Images, do imply all external Acts of Adoration; and that the Image of our Saviour is to have the self same Adoration paid to it, that would be due unto himself were he personally present.

And the Universal Practice of the Romish Church (wholly to pass over the Vile stuff of their Doctors, Schoolmen and Casuists) will tell you the meaning of their *debitus honor & veneratio*.

The consent of Nations (saith the Learned Grotius) have made Sacrifices, Oblations and Incense, proper signs of Divine Worship; but, though I had time, I need not stand to shew, that the Images of Christ, Angels and Saints, especially that of the Blessed Virgin, are every where Worshipped with these signs, and with all the Rites of the most solemn Invocation in Sacred Offices, and in places set apart for Divine Worship. And they do all the external honour to the Saints and Angels in the Addresses they make unto them, whether immediately or as represented by Images, that 'tis imaginable they should do to our Saviour himself, or the Blessed Trinity.

Nay,

Nay, They pray unto them, not only for Temporal or Ordinary Blessings, but for Spiritual and Supernatural: such as the Pardon of their sins; and the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, as might be shewn at large.

Now what is Idolatry, if such doings are not? why, they tell us, and we cannot blame them, that the true Notion of Idolatry is only the Worshipping some Creature for the most High God; supposing it to be the most High God. But if so, the Worshipers of the Golden Calf, to be sure, were no Idolaters; for they can be little better than mad themselves, who are able to imagine that the *Israelites* were so mad, as to believe that the Calf which they saw made, and that of their own *Ear-rings* too, was that very God which brought them out of the Land of *Egypt*. But the Gentlemen of *Rome* would have us think that they were so forsaken of their Intellectuals, as so to believe; and we cannot blame them for that neither. For if they did not impudently bear us down, that the Children of *Israel* believed that this Moulten Calf was that God that divided the Sea, wrought so many Miracles for them, and the maker of Heaven and Earth, they would, they are sensible, be necessitated to excuse them from Idolatry, expressly contrary to the words of Scripture. And if this their Notion of Idolatry be the only true one, we are certain that it will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find our Idolaters among the very *Pagans*.

What think you of their Doctrine of *Transubstantiation*, of which take this account from the Council of *Trent*. By the Consecration the whole substance of the Bread is changed into the substance of the Body of Christ our Lord, and the whole substance of the Wine, into the substance of the blood of Christ. So that as like as it still looks

looks to Bread and Wine: Though it hath the perfect Taste, the perfect Feeling and Smell of Bread and Wine, yet it is nothing less; 'tis that very Body that hung upon the Cross at *Jerusalem*, and that very blood that was there shed.

This is the most prodigiously contradictory Doctrine, that I will not say the *Wis* but the *Madness* of men can possibly invent: 'tis a most wonderful complication of most horrid contradictions, and absolute impossibilities. But this is not the *worst* of it, it is also the foundation of so gross and foul Idolatry as is scarcely to be named among the *Gentiles*, or to be found parallel'd in *Peruvia* it self, or the most barbarous parts of *India*. The forementioned Holy Council declares, *nullus itaque dubitandi locus relinquitur, &c.* There is therefore no place left for doubt, but that all good Christians do give the Worship of *Latria*, quæ Vero Deo debetur, which is due to the true God, to this most Holy Sacrament; according to the always received custom of the *Catholick Church*. They should have said, according to the late and upstart custom of the *Romish Faction*. Here you see that the Bread and Wine are Worshipped by them, not as Representations of God, but as God himself.

But what if those words of our Saviour, *This is my Body*, should prove to be a Figure? like those other of his, *I am a Vine, I am a Door, &c.* or what if *This is my body* should be as much a Figure, as they will confess the words presently following are, *viz. This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood?* Where we have a double Figure, both the *Cup* put for the *Wine* in it, and the *Wine* said to be the *New Testament* or *Covenant*, when, supposing it were the very Blood of Christ, it could not be the *New Covenant* it self, but the *Seal* of that *Covenant*; I say, what if these words be to be under-

understood *figuratively*? (as why they should not, the Papists can shew nothing like a reason, but we have shewn *them* the greatest absurdities imaginable in otherwise understanding them) why *then* they themselves will and do acknowledge that they should be guilty of the most gross Idolatry in their Worship of the Host.

What say you to the Popish Doctrine of the *Sacrifice of the Mass*, which is of near kin to the foregoing? The Doctrine of the *Roman Church* is; as you shall find it in the Council of Trent, *That in this Sacrifice which is performed in the Mass, that very Christ is contained, and in a bloudless manner offered, which, upon the Altar of the Cross, did once offer up himself in a bloody manner.* So that, according to *this* Doctrine, our Blessed Saviour must still to the end of the world be laid hold of by Sinners, be ground with their teeth, and sent down into their impure paunches, as often as the Priest shall pronounce the charm, *hoc est enim corpus meum.* And it seems that he was a false Prophet, when he said upon the Cross *it is finished*, seeing there was such an infinite deal of loathsome Drudgery still to be undergone by him. And it seems the Author to the *Hermits* is found to be a false Apostle, in asserting so expressly, as more than once he doth, that such is the Dignity of Christ's Priesthood, and its excellency above the *Levitical*, that by *one* offering he hath made perfect satisfaction, and expiation for sin.

See Dr.
More's
Mystery of
Iniquity.
Book 2.
Chap. 5.

So that this *their* Doctrine of the *Sacrifice of the Mass*, is not only False, but very Corrupt and impious Doctrine.

What say you to their Doctrine of *Purgatory*? which, in short, is *this*: That no souls, except such as are perfectly

few, purified in this life (which they surely acknowledge are extremely few) shall go at their departure hence into a place of happiness or ease, but all, the forementioned excepted into a place of torment; where they may abide for an exceeding long time, even many hundreds of years, except some effectual care be taken for their deliverance.

By this Doctrine the poor people are brought into a most slavish state; by the means hereof their merciless Tyrants the Priests hale them into worse than Egyptian Bondage: who, instead of enjoining them the most reasonable duties to which the Precepts of their Saviour oblige them, and which are most admirably adapted to the cleansing of their natures, and mortifying their corrupt affections, impose upon them a great number of ridiculous Services of their own invention.

But though they cannot pretend the least warrant from Scripture for such doings as these, yet they have a most express Text, they tell you, for their Doctrine of Purgatory, viz. those words of S. Paul, 1 Cor. 3. 15. *But he shall be saved, yet so as by fire.* But he who considers these two things will see nothing like Purgatory in this Text, namely, First, that it is *ὁ δὲ σώζεται*, not he shall be saved *by* fire, but *as it were* by fire, or rather *through* fire. Secondly, that *σωθήσεται ὡς διὰ πυρός*, *to be saved as through fire*, is a Proverbial Speech (as those great Criticks, Grotius and Scaliger, with others, have shewed) signifying *to be saved from most eminent danger.*

And as this Doctrine of theirs is groundless, so is it as wicked, it being a most vile affront to the Merits and Satisfaction of our Blessed Saviour: For in order to the establishing of this Doctrine they teach, that, *The Passion of Christ takes away only the guilt of Mortal sins,*

sins, not their eternal Punishment, which is as non-judicial as false and impious.

'Tis an impious Doctrine also, both as it is devised to inflave the Consciences of the Poor People, and to bring them into absolute subjection to their Priests; and likewise to gratifie their greedy Appetites, and to bring their *Purses* no less under their power than their *Consciences*.

What say you to their Doctrine of the *Non-necessity of the Laity's partaking of the Cup in the Lords Supper, and their being Rob'd accordingly of their share therein?* expressly contrary to our Saviours institution, and the Practice of the first Ages of the Church, and of all other Churches in the world.

What say you to their well known Doctrine, *Of the Non-necessity of Repentance before the imminent point of death?* And to this *other* that goes beyond *that*, viz. *that meer Attrition* (or sorrow for sin for fear of hell) *if accompanied with the Sacrament of Penance is sufficient to a sinners justification and acceptance with God?* This the Council of *Trent* doth plainly take for granted, in the *fourth* Chapter of their *fourteenth* Session.

What say you to the Doctrine of *Opus operatum?* which makes the meer work *done* in all acts of Devotion, sufficient to the Divine Acceptance: particularly the bare *saying* of Prayers, without either *mind-ing* what they say, or *understanding* it. And agreeably hereunto the *Romish* Church enjoyns the saying of them in a Language unknown to the generality of her children; notwithstanding the perfectly contrary Doctrine delivered by *S. Paul* in the *14th* Chap. of the *first* to the *Corinthians*.

(66)
What say you to the Doctrine of the *Insufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for mens Salvation*; and for denying them to be a complete Rule of Faith, and Practice in things necessary, without her Traditions? Wherein she gives the Lye to the same great Apostle, who tells his son Timothy that, *the Scriptures are able to make wise to Salvation*: and that by them the man of God may be perfected, and thoroughly furnished to every good work.

What say you to her Doctrine of the Gospels obscurity, as things of absolute necessity to be believed and practised? And upon purpose to persuade the people to an implicit belief in her self, and to receive without examining whatsoever doctrines she shall please to call Articles of Faith.

This is a wicked Doctrine in itself also, as well as upon the account of the *Design* of it: It being most unworthy of God to require all under pain of damnation, rightly to understand those Points which are obscurely revealed.

What say you to her Doctrine of the *dangerousness of the vulgar reading the Holy Scriptures*; and her Practice answerable thereunto, of denying them the Bible in their own language?

What say you to her Doctrine that, *Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks*?

What say you to this Doctrine that, *the most horrid villanies are then lawful when necessary to the promoting of the interest of the Catholick cause*? I do not say that it is decreed in any Council; or that it is in express

displayed
by to be
learned
from the
Council of
Trent

express terms taught by any of them: But however, if it be lawful to judge of mens opinions by their constant practices, we may without a Calumny call this also a Doctrine of the Church of Rome. Particularly, the world hath for a long time been well acquainted with her most horrible Cruelties, upon the account of Religion.

To mind you of a few famous instances: in the persecution of the *Albigenses* and *Waldenses*, were miserably murdered no fewer than a hundred thousand: In the Massacre of France, in the space of three months, an hundred thousand: In the *Low-Countries*, in a few years, were cut off by the hand of the common hangman thirty and six thousand Protestants: And by the holy Inquisition (as *Vesputius* witnesseth, who was well acquainted therewith) were destroyed in less than thirty years space, one hundred and fifty thousand, with all manner of the most exquisite cruelties.

I need not mind you what a vast number were Burnt at the stake in our own Country, in the Reign of Queen Mary: Nor what additions have been made since to Romes Butcheries, in *Piedmont* and *Ireland*.

The excellent Mr. Joseph Mede declares it as his Opinion, that the Papal Persecution doth equal, if not exceed, the destruction of men made upon the Church by the Ten famous Persecutions under the Pagan Emperors. And this he wrote before the horrible slaughters in Piedmont and Ireland.

And what a horrible slaughter had there been in England, by the Gun-powder Treason, if it had not been prevented by a Wonderful Providence? And also what work the Romanists would have been at here again before this time, if God in his infinite mercy had not defeated the Councils of those bloudy *Achittophels*, all who do not wilfully shut their eyes, and are not Papists at least in Masquerade, should one would think,

think, acknowledge themselves satisfied, after so great evidence.

So that we need no further proof that the Woman hath *Rome Christian* for her principal Seat, upon whose head *S. John* tells us, was a name written, *Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of Harlots and Abominations of the earth*: and whom he saw drunk with the blood of the Saints, and with the blood of the Martyrs of *Jesus*. But we have farther proof that the now mentioned wicked doctrine, may truly be charged upon the Church of *Rome*: For her abominable Practices do not only justify this charge, but several of the Doctrines of her darling sons, those pretious youths the *Jesuits*, and which (as they tell you) are much elder than their order, *viz.* That of the lawfulness of Equivocations and Mental Reservations, even before Courts of Judicature, at least, if they consist of Hereticks; of the putting which vile principle into practice we have had of late diverse marvelous and most astonishing instances.

That of the Popes power of Dispensing with the most Solemn Oaths, and of Absolving Subjects from their Allegiance to Heretical Princes.

That of the Lawfulness, nay Meritoriousness of taking Arms against them, of Stabbing and Poisoning them. And we of this Kingdom too well know that the *Romish* Church make no bones of practising upon these Principles.

I might still farther proceed in instancing in her most corrupt and wicked Principles, but you have had enough in all Conscience: And but that, now especially, we are obliged to take all opportunities for the exposing of the vileness of the *Romish* Religion, I would e'en be as soon engag'd in stirring Jakes's, and raking dunghills, as in such work as this. God

God be thanked for that mighty Spirit that hath been stirred up throughout the Nation against *Popery*: Oh that it more generally proceeded from our sense of the hatefulness thereof, and the extreme dishonour it brings to Christianity, and its infinite injuriousness to the Souls of men, as well as from the concern we have for our *Temporal* interest; which is but a mean and pitiful consideration in comparison of *those* other. And the better the Principles of *Popery* and the Practices of the *Papists* are understood, the greater and more lasting must *their* zeal against them needs be, who have any hearty kindness either for Christianity or for Natural Religion; either for Christianity or for good Morality and common honesty, or even mere good nature.

I will not so far imitate the horrible uncharitableness of the *Romish* Church, as to say that 'tis impossible to find any sincere Christians in her Communion; and much less, that no honest or good natur'd people are among them: But *this* we are very certain may safely be said that, whosoever is thoroughly instructed in the Popish Principles and acts accordingly, is so much a stranger to *Christianity*, that he hath totally cast off all *Humanity*.

Whosoever is a *thorough* Papist hath no Conscience in his own keeping; his Conscience is perfectly at the dispose of his Holy Father and his Confessor: Nor is there any villany, be it never so great, but he is prepared for it, whensoever a Priest or Jesuit by commission from the Pope shall oblige him to it.

That Protestant doth but slightly understand *Popery*, who dares trust his throat with a thorough Papist, although he be seemingly a man of never so good a nature,

nature, or of never so good Morals: and the more conscientious he is in his way, by so much the more dangerous a person is he. That's a rare Religion in the mean time, the more true to which any man is, the greater Villain he must necessarily be. And those are a precious sort of Christians, of which one cannot adventure to give a true and impartial Character, and to paint them in their own colours, but he must be in danger to be Censured as a scurrilous person, as a man of a foul mouth, and a down-right Railer.

Let us all therefore take up those words of *Jacob*, in reference to this Generation, which he uttered concerning his two wicked sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, *O my soul come not thou into their secret, unto their assembly mine honour be not thou united.*

To make some Application of what hath been discoursed.

First, Is the *putting away a good Conscience* the true cause to which *making shipwrack of the Faith* is to be imputed? Is *this* the account into which it is to be resolved? Then, as we would be out of danger of falling into Heresie, and *particularly* of turning *Papists*, and of making shipwrack of the Faith as *they* have done, let us have a great care to hold fast a good Conscience: *To exercise our selves in keeping Consciences void of offence both towards God and towards men*: To lead lives answerable to the holy Doctrine which we profess to believe.

If any man will do the will of God (or be sincerely willing to do it) he shall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, saith our Blessed Saviour, *John 7. 17.* He shall be able to discern between truth and falsehood, and shall be guided into and kept in the truth.

The

The truth hath no fast hold of any, but those who receive it in the love of it, and make it the measure and rule of their lives and actions.

It is not at all strange that Learned and Knowing men should make shipwrack of the Faith, for Learning and Knowledge is no security while separated from Honesty and a Good Conscience. There is no error so absurd or dangerous, but we ought to expect an insincere person will embrace it, when once it becomes serviceable to that Interest he is most concerned for the promoting of.

Even those of us who do now shew the most forward zeal against *Papery*, if we be wedded to any corrupt Affection, and have only the *Form*, but are void of the *Power* of Godliness, will be in never the less danger, notwithstanding our present zeal, of Apostatizing, if ever it should become our *temporal* interest (which God forbid) to turn Papists.

Secondly, Is it so apparent that the Church of *Rome* hath made so woful a shipwrack of the Faith? Then what an infinite obligation lyeth upon us to the greatest Thankfulness to our good God, for rescuing these Nations from under her yoke; and for those Miracles of mercy which he hath wrought for us, in blasting so many of their deep laid designs, their late great Conspiracy, and late Sham-plots, for the reducing of us to our old Captivity.

If it had not been the Lord who was on our side, now may England say, if it had not been the Lord who was on our side, when these men rose up against us; then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: then the waters had overwhelmed us, and the streams had gone over our soul. Let us therefore Bless the Lord, who hath not given us as a prey unto their teeth.

E . Last-

Lastly, As we would still be secured from Popish Conspiracies, from the unwearied attempts of our old Adversaries against us, take we great heed of provoking the Almighty to withdraw at length his Protection, and abandon us to their Malice, by walking unworthy of that glorious Light and Liberty we now enjoy in the Church of *England*. And while we have the light let us walk in the light, lest God, in his just judgment, suffer us to be again involved in *Egyptian* darkness.

Oh happy Children of the Church of *England*, if we could be perswaded to prize our present Vast Privileges, before our having lost them doth force us to set a high value on them.

And, Oh that we were capable of so much Wisdom, as no longer to strengthen the hands of our common enemy, by our as unreasonable as Unchristian Animosities against one another. That we had once as great a zeal against the Anti-christs within our own breasts, Pride, Anger, Malice and Bitterness, as we seem to have against the Anti-Christ in the *Roman* Chair: Those Anti-christs being the greatest friends this Anti-christ hath, and more our enemies than he is capable of being.

Oh that at length we could be convinced of this great truth, that the Christian Religion consisteth not in meats or drinks, mere external things, but in righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. In Humility, Meekness, Self-denial, Obedience to Authority in all lawful things, love to God, and love to men, &c.

Oh that we had a vigorous powerful sense of this, that neither the most admired Gifts nor appearances of Grace, which are not joyned with a Benign and Charitable

ritable temper, can at all recommend us to the Divine favour : That he hath no Participation of the God-like Life and Nature, who is of a Quarrellsome, Contentious, Uncharitable Spirit, be he in a many *other* respects never so Saint-like. And that Christian love is a thousand times better argument of a renewed state, than most of those marks and characters which are ordinarily given of a godly man.

If we were once brought to this happy pass, to have a lively sense of *these* things : to make great Conscience of *preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace* ; and to abandon all Separating, Dividing, Sowre and ill-natur'd Principles and Practices, we shall not *then* need to fear the malice of the *Papists*, were their power greater than, God be thanked, it is ; but *till* then, all our other endeavours to secure our selves may fail of success.

But alas, I fear, that never had a People sadder *Omens* of miserable days than *we* now have : And nothing bodes worse than *this* that, we are so far from Uniting among our selves, notwithstanding we seem so sensible of extraordinary danger from our common Enemy, that our breaches daily grow wider and wider.

We seem no less infatuated, no less madly bent upon our own destruction, than were the miserable *Jews* in the Siege of *Jerusalem* ; among whom there were never such desperate Feuds, as when they were all surrounded with the *Roman* Armies.

Those who, by their causeless forsaking of our Communion, have greatly strengthened the hands of our Enemies, are so far from being yet made sensible of the mischief of Separation, and the most pernicious consequen-

ces of Dividing, that many of them are *now* grown fiercer than ever (as appears by their late Books and Pamphlets, &c.) against that Church, which *Rome* hath always found to her cost, the most impregnable Bulwark in all Christendom against Popery.

And on the *other* hand (for I will not be taxed with Partiality) there are too too many among *our selves*, that do *little* consult our Churches interest, nor consequently the interest of the *Protestant Religion*, but greatly *disserve* both, by their intemperate heats, and branding *all* with the names of Fanaticks and Presbyterians who are not come up to *their* pitch, and in all things just of their complexion; although they be as obedient to both their Civil and Ecclesiastical Superiors as themselves, are no less truly Regular and Conformable.

We ought by Love and Sweetness to encourage men, all we can, *this* is to act like the Disciples of the mild and most lovely temper'd Jesus: and not by Sowreness and Censoriousness tempt those to depart from us, who would gladly still hold Communion with us*.

* we think
it high time
to shew our
dislike of

those against whom we have been ever enough offended, though we could not in this manner declare it, who under pretence of Affection to Us and Our Service, assume to themselves the liberty of Reviling, Threatning and Reproaching others; and as much as in them lies, endeavour to stifle and divert their good inclinations to Our Service; and so to prevent that Reconciliation and Union of Hearts and Affections, which can only, with Gods Blessing, make Us joycee in each other, and keep our Enemies from rejoicing. King Charles II. in His Proclamation against Vicious and Debauched people,

It is evident
I meant no-
thing by
this passage
but that we
ought to

And where we find an inclination towards *returning* in any that have *departed* from us, we should be glad to meet them half-way in order to the bringing them over to us.

imitate the Fathers behaviour in the Parable towards his Prodigal Son.

And

And it becomes us likewise to make a difference between Peaceable and Modest Dissenters from us, and those who are Turbulent, Seditious and Factious, and not wind up all together in the same bottom.

I may add also, that there are, God knows, too too many *Debauchees* in the Nation, who would be thought great Champions for the King and the Church, but do infinite prejudice to both, by the mad and frantick expressions of their zeal. Who do mighty honour to Fanaticism by charging all with it, that run not with *them* to the same excels of Riot.

One would suspect that *these*, whatsoever they pretend, do really design nothing more, than to make both the King and the Church as friendless as they are able.

Heaven help them both, should they ever be so unfortunate, (which God forbid) as to stand in need of *this* sort of people.

If indeed Huffing and Healthing, Cursing and Damning, and giving vile names would do the business, *then* let *them* alone to protect and defend the King and Church: but former experience hath assured us, that *those* are the best weapons that most of them can boast of their being good at.

A Neighbouring King, and the Church of *Rome*, may wish God's blessing on the hearts of these Gentlemen: but our own King (whom God preserve) and the Church of *England* have little reason to Con them thanks, for any service they are like to do *them*.

*There are
likewise an-
other sorts
of men, of
whom we*

have heard much, and are sufficiently ashamed, who spend their time in Taverns, Tipling-houses, and Debaucheries, giving no other Evidence of their Affection to us, but in Drinking our Health, and inveighing against all others, who are not of their own dissolute temper; and who in truth, have more discreditd our cause, by the licence of their manners and lives, than they could ever advance it by their Affection or Courage, &c. In the same Proclamation,

King

King Charles the First of Glorious Memory was very sensible of the Consequence of such mens assistance, which proved fatal to him : *The goodness of whose Cause did sink under the burden of their sins*, according to the sad Prefage of our excellent *Chillingworth*, in a Sermon Preached to the Court at Oxford.

And if ever his Majesty and the Church should be again set upon by **Scribes & Pharisees**, God grant us better assistance than that of **publicans & Sinners**.

But I wonder in my heart, what should make any Debauched and Prophane people pretend the least zeal for the Church of *England*; there being no Church in the world that more condemns all unrighteousness and sin; or which would be more severe against wicked livers, were she in circumstances to put in execution her own Discipline. Which she is not like to be, so long as the Civil Magistrate is so remiss in executing, according to their Oaths, those excellent Laws that are Enacted against Drunkenness, Swearing, Uncleaness, Profanation of the Lord's day, and other wicked Practices.

And I add that *Popery* and *Fanaticism* will both undoubtedly still grow upon us, be we never so zealous against both, whilst that Debauchery and Prophane-ness, which have so miserably overspread the Nation, do still escape scot-free and go unpunish'd.

I cannot but observe one thing more that, 'tis an uncouth and ridiculous Spectacle, to behold wild Fanaticks, and prophane * people, that call themselves Church of *England* men, (who are far from deserving that Title, whether they be Clergy or Laity) contesting together, and falling foul upon one another: One would

* This Paragraph is a little enlarged.

would be tempted upon this occasion, to take up the Grand Vizier *Kuperles* blunt reply to the French Ambassador (upon his Accosting him with the news of *Ricant*: the Spanish Armies being routed by the French,) viz. *What matter is it to me whether the hog worries the dog, or the dog the hog, so my Masters head be but safe.*

To Conclude.

TILL I see on the one hand a far greater Sense of the hatefulness of *Schism*, and of breaking the Peace and Unity of the Church: of which all good people did heretofore express the greatest Abhorrence and Detestation.

And till I see on *all* hands more sincere endeavours to put away Anger, Wrath, Malice and Bitterness.

Till I see that the several divided Parties among us, are more inclinable to unite heartily with *us* of the Church of *England*, and *We* again with *them*, so far forth as unanimously to oppose *Popery*, that designs the destruction of us *all*. Which all but hot-spurs, that never allow themselves leisure to think a wise, or sedate thought, must needs know to be absolutely necessary to our mutual preservation at *this* time. And it would be well, would we *herein* learn of the *Papists*, who, notwithstanding the great differences that are among *them* also, can joyn together against Protestants.

Till I see again that our Zeal against *Popery* is generally so well tempered, as not to endanger our running headlong into the other extreme, that of *Confusion*: which will, no question, end in *Popery*.

Till

Till I see that we hate Popery for its Disloyalty, as well as for its Idolatrous and Cruel Principles and Practices:
 Till I see also that our opposition to Popery ariseth more generally from a sense of the infinite scandal it brings upon the Holy Religion of our Blessed Saviour, and its wofully depraving the Souls of men, as well as from our concern for our Temporal interest.

Till I moreover see that Zeal in any sort of people whatsoever, is not accounted sufficient to give them the Reputation of Good Protestants or Good Churchmen, so long as they are bad Christians, and their Conversations declare them no hearty Friends to any Religion.

And (in a word) till I see that our Excellent Reformed Religion, that the pure and undefiled Religion of the Church of England, hath a more powerful influence upon the Lives and Spirits, of those who profess themselves Anti-papists and Anti-sectarians: I say, till I see *these* things, I shall, for my part, be far from concluding with *Agag*, that the bitterness of death is past, that the *worst* is not still behind; which God in his infinite mercy, give us wisdom to prevent, by our timely Reformation in the forementioned instances, for Christ Jesus his sake: To whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost, be rendred by us, and by all the world, all Honour, Glory and Praise. Amen.

F. I. N. I. S.

